

*Commercial Aviation***LIVERPOOL—DONCASTER—AMSTERDAM**

Councillor A. Thomson hands the mails to the Mayor of Doncaster before the departure of the first Amsterdam service.

IT would be a mistake to under-estimate the future importance of any air link between the North of England and the Continent. The Dutch, a couple of years ago, were shrewd enough to establish themselves up there, and have run a Liverpool, Hull and Holland summer line ever since. The north countrymen were not then "air-minded." Now, thanks to local services run by Blackpool and West Coast and by Railway Air Services, they are accustomed to air travel and should be ready to fly to and from the Continent.

When K.L.M. started up there was no English enterprise ready to take a half-share, but this year, when the service reopened via Doncaster, the British flag flew alongside that of Holland—for which we have to thank the enterprise, not of one of the subsidised companies, but of British Continental Airways. Doncaster has been chosen instead of Hull because it

serves a great industrial district and because it has outstanding facilities as a railway centre. It is necessary for air transport to serve a district rather than a city.

The arrangement between the British and Dutch companies is a fifty-fifty one, both as regards operation and representation. At Speke, Liverpool, a B.C.A. airport representative looks after the interests of both companies, and at Doncaster affairs are in K.L.M. hands.

On June 30 the Fokker F18 (pilot Hongdong), which was to start the service, flew from Croydon with Mr. F. W. Jones, managing director of B.C.A., and Mr. A. Plesman, Mr. J. de Vries, and Capt. Spry Leverton, of K.L.M. Although the radio beacon is not yet working properly at Speke, and the marker beacons are not in place, some use can already be made of the beacon.

On July 1 the Fokker took off to schedule at 11.40 a.m., closely followed by a B.C.A. D.H. 86A (pilot Bredenkamp), which had come in from Croydon that morning with Messrs. W. E. L. Courtney, G. North and S. L. Hume, all of the Air Ministry, and Mr. J. R. Bryans, of B.C.A. At Doncaster the two machines were met by one Lord Mayor (of Bradford), by about fifteen other Mayors, and by members of the Doncaster Airport Committee. Amongst the nine paying passengers in the machine which left for Holland were the Mayor and Mayoress of Doncaster, the Town Clerk, and Mrs. Bagshaw, his wife. Mr. Plesman accompanied them to Holland, leaving Mr. de Vries (K.L.M. foreign manager) to represent the company at the very excellent lunch at the historic Mansion House.

Councillor A. Thomson, genial and energetic chairman of the local airport committee, proposed the toast of the two air lines, to which Mr. de Vries replied for K.L.M., paying tribute to the excellent layout of the airport buildings and the easy accessibility of the airport from the town (five minutes by car). He spoke of the excellent work done by Mr. R. E. Ford, estates surveyor, responsible for the airport layout, and referred to the great assistance, not always fully recognised, which is given by the Air Ministry in these cases. Mr. Farey Jones followed on B.C.A.'s behalf with an excellent speech, urging the representatives of surrounding districts to support the service, and congratulating Doncaster on its faith and vision.

A number of flights were made in the D.H.86A, and later this machine left for Croydon.

Travel agents and business people in the North show an altogether more optimistic attitude towards air transport this year, and there is no doubt that a service linking Liverpool, Doncaster and surrounding districts in a single day with places as far away as Berlin, Borkum, Chemnitz, Copenhagen, Malmö, Munich and Oslo, to name but a few, should not fail to appeal to business people.

Le Touquet's New Airport

MORE than 150 machines turned up at Le Touquet on Saturday for the opening of the new airport, and there must have been about 200 before the conclusion of the weekend. An inauguration banquet, held at the Royal Picardy Hotel, was attended by about 700 people.

On Friday, Air Dispatch alone ran nine services. Three machines left at 3, 6, and 8 p.m.

The new airport lies only about two miles from Paris Plage, Le Touquet, in a south-easterly direction, and lies beside Etaples, though on the opposite bank of the River Canche. The maximum run (E. to W.) is 1,000 yards, and the others are about 875 yards. No landing fees are charged, and night-landing facilities will be arranged in due course.

A Million-pound Irish Company

AN air transport company with a capital of £1,000,000 is to be established in the Irish Free State under the terms of the Air Navigation and Transport Bill, 1936, the text of which has just been circulated.

The Free State Government may hold all or any part of the shares in this company (together with the right to nominate directors). The company will have the exclusive right to air transport operation in the Free State—either as an operating company or through its subsidiaries. These subsidiary companies will include Aer Lingus, Teoranta, the organisation now operating Irish Sea Airways jointly with Blackpool and West Coast Air Services, Ltd., and this company will receive a loan from the national company (as soon as it is registered) to discharge any liabilities which it may have incurred.



MAILS TO STOCKHOLM: On Wednesday of last week the first direct mail service to Stockholm was opened by British Airways. The machine left Gatwick with passengers and 1,000 lb. of mail. (Flight photograph.)